RESEARCH SUMMARY

forest sciences
NELSON FOREST REGION

Oct. 1992 RS-004

Revised Ecological Field Guide Now Off the Presses!

– *T.F. Braumandl*

- **New field guide vastly expanded and improved**
- **New features make site identification easier**

INTRODUCTION

A revised and greatly expanded biogeoclimatic ecological classification field guide (ecoguide) for the Nelson Forest Region has been published. Replacing the 77-page 1986 guide, the new 311-page ecoguide contains many new site identification tools and management interpretations. A detailed chapter on how to use the guide and chapters on wildlife and pests have been included.

The original classification has been fine-tuned, based on a reanalysis of the original data and the incorporation of new plot data. Data for similar subzones from adjoining forest regions were also used. Through this reanalysis, the classification was correlated with classifications in other parts of the province. This resulted in the recognition of 24 subzones and variants and 120 site series. The old ecoguide recognized 15 subzones/variants.

NEW GUIDE CONTENT AND FORMAT

Introduction of new jargon has been kept to a minimum. Subzones are now named and coded connotatively with relative precipitation and temperature descriptors. For example, the old Lower Kootenay - Columbia Moist Southern Interior Cedar - Hemlock variant (ICHa1) is now called the Dry Warm Interior Cedar - Hemlock subzone (ICHdw). Common English plant names are used in addition to the Latin scientific names.

Tables that outline distinctive zonal vegetation help users distinguish subzones. Additional information identifying subzone and variant is contained on subzone/variant summary pages.

For each subzone/variant the following new material has been provided:

- climatic descriptions including snowpack depth, dry and frozen soil duration
- brief soils, geology and landforms descriptions
- predominant disturbance regimes, range, and wildlife values
- vegetation tables depicting common percentage cover values
- site series identification flow charts outlining stand, soil moisture regime, and diagnostic vegetation conditions
- environmental features of each site series.

Site series management interpretations have been greatly expanded to include:

- common seedling growth limiting factors, such as cold soil, dry soil, or nutrient deficiencies
- relative tree productivity including mean site index
- vegetation potential, a relative assessment of post-harvest vegetation abundance, as well as commonly occurring vegetation complexes
- common site sensitivities to erosion, mass wasting, forest floor displacement, and mineral soil displacement
- other prescription considerations, such as machine travel, partial cutting, organic matter conservation suggestions, and presence of frost.

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Guide co-author Mike Curran, Research Soil Scientist, gathers information for new edition of guide

A chapter outlining wildlife habitat needs, degree of endangerment, and occurrence of species by subzone/variant is designed to raise the awareness of the diversity of wildlife found in our forests. In another chapter, forest health risks are presented by tree species and subzone/variant to highlight subzones/variants where these agents should be considered.

Appendices include:

- revised silviculture stocking standards
- references for other ecological description publications and maps, and plant identification guides
- new soil moisture and nutrient regime, parent material, soil texturing, humus form, and rock type identification tables and keys
- revised forage and erosion control seeding mixes
- common to Latin plant name conversion
- conversion table for old (1986) classifications

The new ecoguide will simplify more accurate site identification and provide valuable ecological insights for management prescription development.

The guide is printed on waterproof, standard field guide size paper, and comes in a six ring binder. Frequently used sections are tabbed for ease of use.

Suggestions for improvements are always welcomed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION SEE:

Braumandl, T.F. and M.P. Curran. 1992. *A field guide for site identification and interpretation for the Nelson Forest Region*. Land Manage. Handb 20. B.C. Min. For., Victoria, B.C.

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To obtain copies of the ecoguide, contact:

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For copies of the revised 1:250 000 scale subzone/variant maps, contact:

Draughting Section,
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